

MEMORANDUM

To: Courtney Johnson-Woods
From: Victoria Travers
Date: February 14, 2018
Subject: Collaborative Teams

Key learnings from each reading & TED Talk:

Social Intelligence and the Biology of Leadership

How a leader interacts with their peers, specifically by exhibiting empathy and becoming attuned to others' moods—literally affect both their own brain chemistry and that of their followers. It was very interesting to hear that positive collaboration and communication can be biologically traced. If a leader is effective at communication with others down to a biological level, people are going to respond positively to them and this will allow for a better collaborative experience. This then allows for a system of brain interconnectedness, and a great collaborator uses this to their advantage.

This article also states that our brain's spindle cells send off a nearly immediate reaction when considering someone for a job, and that reaction is essentially a "gut feeling" about whether someone believes they would be right or wrong for it. These judgements have been proven to be fairly accurate, so leaders are told to follow their instincts. This means a leader not only is using these instincts to create a better collaborative team, but they are communicating with this person in order to establish their deduction.

Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams

A large collaborative team is sometimes needed to accomplish a "one shot only" project. In order to accomplish this, this large teams composed of multiple different subteams *needs* to communicate effectively in order to accomplish their goal successfully and on time.

These teams also struggle to collaborate successfully. Large teams such as these, especially when filled with intelligent, strong people, are naturally less willing to collaborate smoothly. In order to so do then, they have to communicate in order to trump the obstacles regarding numbers and ego.

Building a Collaborative Enterprise

The software developer mentioned was initially shocked frustrated when handed a step-by-step on how to do his job. He then realized how important it was to have a play by play, considering there were 30 to 40 other people that he needed to collaborate with on the same code. In order to make the code run efficiently (which needs to have minimal to zero errors in order to do so), the company had to ensure that 100% proper communication was being given to all of the employees.

The collaborative community, however, also rewards further communication and collaborative efforts. This is present in the ethic of contribution. This ensures that the employees are actually collaborating and communicating amongst themselves in order to heighten the success of the project rather than just “doing their jobs”.

How to Manage for Collective Creativity

Innovation is not about one sole person having an aha! Moment. Pixar, for example, requires 250 people and 4-5 years in order to create a motion picture. Innovation is about collective, collaborative genius. This requires people to communicate and work together in order to achieve their goal.

“Individuals in innovative organizations learn how to inquire, they learn how to actively listen, but guess what? They also learn how to advocate for their point of view. They understand that innovation rarely happens unless you have both diversity and conflict.” Conflict is a natural part of collaboration. People involved in the process and who are a part of a successful team know that in order to have original, creative ideas, there needs to be variety and opposing ideas in order to achieve interesting and successful middle grounds.